

Power of the People

By W. Marc Farmer, General Manager,
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The Green Truth about the WOEC Building

I figured I would take the opportunity to respond to the political cartoon my friend Robb put in the last issue of *The Independent*. He brought to my attention that I have not mentioned anything in my previous articles about the green aspects of our new facility and what energy efficient measures we included, whether or not we are doing a Leed Certified building, and what additional measures are we considering.

Let me first address the question about Leed Certification. Much is being made in today's commercial/industrial buildings about becoming Leed Certified. There are different levels of certification that can be obtained, depending on the amount of energy efficiency measures utilized and the types of materials used in the construction of the facility. While we have no problem with the intention, goals, and objectives of the certification, we did take issue with the costs. To apply for the Leed Certification would have cost the Co-op \$50,000. Meeting the requirements to receive

the certification would have added between 20 and 30 percent more onto the cost of construction. Neither of these costs was acceptable to West Oregon or to the members we serve.

As an electric utility, we are more than aware of the energy efficiency measures, products and materials that are available, and promote these to our own membership. We partner with BPA to offer incentives on certain programs so we can offer them to our members. With this knowledge and experience, we did not see the need to pay someone \$50,000 to tell us what we already know and for them to give us a piece of paper saying we actually used them. We will use them because it makes sense, not to pay for a certificate. The \$50,000 was better spent actually paying for the energy efficiency measures and products we use in the construction of our facility.

WOEC used sustainable design elements that made sense cost-wise to best achieve energy efficiency and environmental quality in our facilities. We have well exceeded all of the current standard building codes and are considering additional measures if they prove to be cost effective. Some of the most important measures include thermally efficient windows, maximized building insulation, LED parking lot lights, energy efficient lighting throughout the building, motion/occupancy

sensors on all interior lighting, use of daylighting, low flow fixtures, high energy efficient HVAC system, R-17 insulated bay doors for the vehicle building, use of low maintenance landscaping with drip irrigation, and use of renewable natural materials in most of the construction.

The Co-op Board will be hearing a presentation at one of our next meetings regarding the possible placement of solar panels on the south facing roof of the truck bays. A cost benefit analysis will determine whether it makes sense for the Co-op to pursue installation. So in answer to Robb's cartoon, "Yes Robb, more than just the roof is green at West Oregon EC's new building." We chose not to pay someone else to tell us it is, and we just put the money into the building instead.

Coastal rivers open for coho Sept. 15

Oregon anglers will enjoy the largest wild coho fishery on Oregon's coastal rivers in 15 years when the season opens on September 15.

For the third year in a row, predicted coho salmon returns are high enough to open some rivers and lakes to the harvest of wild fish. In 2011 these include the Nehalem, Tillamook Bay, Nestucca, Siletz, Yaquina, Alsea, Siuslaw, Umpqua, Coos, and Coquille rivers and Tenmile Lakes. Established wild coho fisheries will continue in Siltcoos and Tahkenitch lakes.

The Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission approved the seasons in June but, because coastal coho are listed as threatened under the federal Endangered Species Act, fishery managers also needed approval from NOAA Fisheries, which came on August 24.

The daily bag limit for wild coho will be one fish on all water bodies, but seasonal limits, harvest quotas and angling deadlines will vary with each river. For a complete description of the 2011 wild coho seasons go to http://www.dfw.state.or.us/resources/fishing/docs/2011_Coastal_Fall_Chinook_Seasons_table.pdf

In order to allow some wild

coho harvest while still allowing enough fish upriver to spawn, biologists have set conservative harvest quotas for each river basin. Quotas range from 200 to 1,300 fish.

According to Mike Gray, ODFW fish biologist in Charleston, the wild coho fisheries have been gaining popularity among anglers.

"When that first season opened in 2009, the fishery was relatively new and anglers didn't even catch the quota on the Coquille," he said. By the second year, he added, anglers had started to figure things out and the fish were cooperative, so the quota was reached

quickly and the season closed early.

"By now, people up and down the coast are excited about being able to keep wild coho and look forward to the season," Gray said.

In addition to providing angling opportunity, biologists also see the wild coho seasons as a sign that salmon recovery efforts are paying off. Agencies, watershed councils, and private landowners have expended significant effort and resources into restoring watersheds and salmon habitat, and the momentum is paying dividends for fish.

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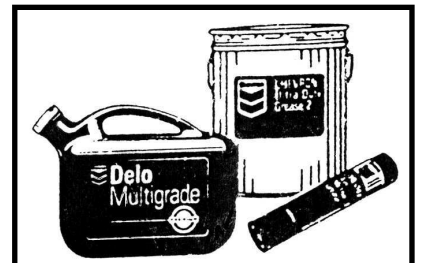
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